

THE PROPOSED SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

QUEBEC, 3rd April, 1855.

To the Honorable

SIR ALLAN N. MACNAB, M. P. P.,

Chairman of the Railway Committee, &c., &c.

SIR,—Being deputed by the Petitioners for the Act to incorporate the Hamilton and South Western Railway Company (which will shortly come before the Committee on Railways) to act as the Agents of the proposed Company, we beg to explain to you the grounds upon which they claim the favorable attention of Parliament; and request that you will lay this communication before the Committee whenever the subject of a Southern Railway shall come up for consideration.

We would, in the first place, direct the attention of the Committee to the accompanying Map or Sketch of South-Western Canada, showing the route proposed to be followed by the Petitioners for the Hamilton and South-Western Charter, and also indicating the lines already opened, in progress, and in contemplation, under existing Charters. It will be seen that between the Great Western line and Lake Erie there lies an extensive tract of country, varying in width from some 17 to 45 miles. It is composed of no less than seven Counties, namely, Welland, Haldimand, Norfolk, Elgin, Kent, Essex, and Wentworth, containing in 1852 a population of about 150,000, which may now be set down, with three years increase, at 180,000. By reference to the subjoined Table, will be seen the number of acres of land, assessed value of taxable property, and population of these several Counties.

In April, 1836, a Charter was granted for the construction of a Railway, to extend from the Niagara to the Detroit River, which, according to the Survey then made, was intended to skirt the shore of Lake Erie. The reasons which deterred the commencement of this line, and the consequent expiry of the Charter, from *non user*, are so well known, that they need not be referred to. The grounds upon which the Legislature were appealed to, by the Great Western Company, which was subsequently chartered, to refuse to the Lake Erie Company, a renewal of their Act of Incorporation are of more importance and require notice.

Upon each renewed application of the parties interested, in this Southern line, they were met by the Great Western Company with the argument that being competing lines, there was not sufficient business to support both, and that consequently Capitalists would refuse to embark their